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Seventy-first year

Letter dated 15 July 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to enclose herewith the Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine on the thematic report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights entitled, "Accountability for killings in Ukraine from January 2014 to May 2016" (see annex).

I would appreciate your having the present letter and its annex distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 72 (c), and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Volodymyr **Yelchenko**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine on the thematic report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights entitled, "Accountability for killings in Ukraine from January 2014 to May 2016"

Ukraine highly appreciates the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) aimed at identifying and eliminating the serious problems in the human rights protection system and supports its efforts to promote international human rights principles and standards in order to prevent grave human rights violations in the future.

The report of OHCHR entitled, "Accountability for killings in Ukraine from January 2014 to May 2016" once again highlights that the majority of casualties in Ukraine were caused by the armed conflict, which is continually fuelled by the influx of foreign fighters, including former and present military personnel, as well as weapons from the Russian Federation. Unfortunately, the majority of the civilian casualties were caused by the shelling of residential areas by illegal armed groups. Ukrainian armed forces are prohibited from firing at positions of militants located in the areas inhabited by civilians.

We stress the exceptional importance of conducting a comprehensive investigation and analysis of the casualties resulting from the illegal occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and from Russian military aggression in Donbas.

In this regard, it becomes a matter of crucial importance to document the facts surrounding civilian deaths caused by military actions, as well as arbitrary executions and torture leading to death by illegal armed groups in Donbas and by the Russian occupying forces. Such documentation will eventually make it possible to establish the facts of the war and other crimes and bring all perpetrators to justice. We emphasize that Ukraine will not tolerate impunity and will investigate all facts pertaining to human rights abuses.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine highly appreciates the initiative of OHCHR and the United Nations human rights monitoring mission in Ukraine in preparing the first thematic report and is ready to cooperate on implementing its recommendations.

We hope that OHCHR will continue to prepare its thematic reports and believe that one of them will be dedicated to the human rights situation in the illegally occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol where the systematic abuses of human rights by the Russian Federation are continuing to take place.

Ukraine calls upon the international community to intensify the pressure on the Russian Federation and armed groups under its control to put an end to arbitrary deprivation of life and all other human rights abuses.